

# Communications Working Group

March 6, 2007



**EM** *Environmental Management*

safety ❖ performance ❖ cleanup ❖ closure

[www.em.doe.gov](http://www.em.doe.gov)

# Communications Working Group Core Members

- Mark Gilbertson, Co-Chair
- Bill Spader, Co-Chair
- Megan Barnett
- Bryan Bower
- Bobby Carr
- Becky Craft
- Doug Frost
- Claudia Gleicher
- Alan Jines
- Sandy Johnson
- Keith Klein
- Bill Levitan
- Dave Moody
- Melissa Nielson
- Jay Rhoderick
- Victoria Seaman
- Scott Van Camp



# Institutional Challenges

- Institutionalize “Communication” – just like “Safety”
- Have effective communications abilities become an ingrained skill



# Charter

- **Purpose:** Develop and oversee the execution of a set of action plans to address communications issues. This effort is a key component in EM's goal of becoming a highly performing organization.



- Action Planning Framework:
  - *Guiding Principles and EM Brand*
  - *Processes and Practices*
  - *Communication Mechanisms*
  - *People*
- Group Motto:

***“LEARN THROUGH DOING”***
- Resources:
  - Energy Communities Alliance Recommendations
  - National Academy of Public Administration Observations
  - 2006 Intergovernmental Meeting Notes
  - Environmental Management Advisory Board Recommendations



# "Quick Wins"

- Successful budget meeting (paradigm shift)
- What other quick wins could we gain ?
- Promulgate EM Brand (Rollout plan)
- Create a career office
- Conformity in websites
- Roll out EM Brand
- Review of GAO and IG reports
- Leverage Field and HQ communication professionals
- Communication training at Leadership offsites
- EM Lanyards with Brand
- Field and HQ offsite (all on the same page)



# Develop Guiding Principles for Communications and EM Brand

**Purpose:** Provide the overall management philosophy on communication and raise immediate awareness through the consistent use of an EM “brand.”

**Deliverables:**

- Develop Communications Guiding Principles and distribute for discussion and comment at the March leadership meeting.
- Roll out the “Brand” with the FY 2007 budget and institutionalize its use across EM.
- Focus on these themes:
  - **Work is Getting Done**
  - **Safety is # 1**
  - **What We Will Accomplish (hi-lite 2 years out)**
  - **The Work Continues (past current Administration)**
  - **Safety -- Performance -- Cleanup -- Closure**



# Processes and Practices

**Purpose:** Establish processes and good practices to improve effectiveness and efficiency of internal and external communications.

**Deliverables:**

- Master Schedule/Calendar developed of key EM communication forums
- FY 2008 Budget Roll-out key message pilot
- Processes for preparing and delivering key messages
- Develop standardized checklist
- Outline format beginning with safety focus and ending with communications needs
- Manage the meeting according to agenda
- Compile list of assigned actions
- Determine effectiveness through metrics development
- Document good practices and institutionalize guidelines for major communications activities (i.e., Budget Rollout)
- Implement use of non-traditional communication methods (i.e., EM Blogs)





# Communication Mechanisms

- Identify Relevant Activities for Posting on the EM Portal and EM Master Calendar
- Develop and Launch Communications Subfolder on EM Lessons Learned Web Page on the EM Portal
- Improve Utilization of EM Portal



# Roll Out New EM Website and Work with Field to Improve its Web Sites

**Purpose:** Strengthen the branding of EM by working with the EM field sites to redesign their web sites to more closely align with the new EM HQ web site.

**Deliverable:** EM-HQ staff is working with the field sites on the redesign of all EM web sites to further the EM brand and recognition.



# People

**Purpose:** Strengthen communication infrastructure with career federal employees to bridge gaps among strong political leadership (new EM front office slot and PA); strong federal group to support communication with Tribes, advisory groups, and other governmental organizations; and communication experts in the field.

**Deliverables:**

- Baseline communications staff in existing HQ organizations (EE, NNSA, NE, RW, SC)
- Provide recommendation to EM-1 for additional career resources
- Work with the Office of Public Affairs to evaluate the opportunity to establish a career federal position focused on EM communications.



# Identify/Support Affinity Groups and/or Communities of Practice (People)

**Purpose:** Improve quality and efficiency of communication through affinity groups and communities of practice.

**Deliverables:**

- List of current groups, POCs.
- Develop profile for each group.
- Post profile on portal and web page.
- Tabulate/survey results from existing groups.
- Model charter and operating principles for new groups.
- Provide tools to support group interactions (web, portal, calendars).



# Develop Rewards and Incentives for Communications Excellence

**Purpose:** Provide positive rewards for individuals that practice excellence in communications; establish communication accountability at organizational and positional levels; define methods for measuring communication success; and establish standards for excellence in communications.

**Deliverables:**

- Determine positive reward options.
- Evaluate performance agreement language options.
- Evaluate building communications standards into individual performance agreements.
- Determine and delineate recommended communications standards and goals.
- Determine appropriate metrics for measuring success of recommendations



# Develop a Communications Training Plan EM Complex-Wide

**Purpose:** Assess current communications tools and methods, determine competency objectives and gaps, and determine guidance and training to ensure that all EM employees have the ability to communicate at the level necessary for their duties and responsibilities.

**Deliverable:**

- Review EM formal and informal communications methods and procedures
- Determine needed communications competencies
- Assess employees' competencies against requirements
- Develop procedures & training courses and sources as required
- Management review of communications proposal
- Issue procedures and initiate training as needed



# Back Up Slides



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# Energy Communities Alliance

## "The Politics of Cleanup-Lessons Learned from Complex Federal Environmental Cleanups" (2/07)

### Engaging the Community through Consulting, Coordination, and Communications:

- The Parties Must Build a Working Relationship--All parties must take the necessary steps to develop and maintain trust, accountability and openness
- Be Organized—Local governments and the community must be organized and proactive, and strive to speak with one voice.
- Resources Ensure Parties Can Participate—The Federal Government and Congress must provide regulators and communities with the financial resources necessary to organize and retain the staffing resources they might need.
- Following the Minimum in Law is Not Enough—Minimum regulatory requirements are insufficient to support substantive public involvement; the parties must develop public involvement processes that are tailored to site-specific needs, recognizing that process is different from negotiations.
- Engage Each Other Regularly—the parties must substantively engage each other throughout the entire cleanup process.





# National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) Observations on EM Organization/Management (1/07)

- Improved communications is a goal for most organizations. No matter how adept an organization is, there is always room for improvement. EM's internal communications system faces significant challenges. EM's 4th Guiding Principle, *Communicate With Excellence*, speaks to this when it directs staff to visibly encourage a no-fault environment within which full, open, accurate, and honest communication in all directions is practiced and valued. NAPA believes that some of the communications challenges in EM are exacerbated by a lack of clear roles and responsibilities throughout EM.
- Effective communications with outside stakeholders are crucial for EM's ability to accomplish its mission. Being able to develop consensus with local communities on end use for a site and the path to achieve that end are often more important than solving the technical barriers facing a cleanup project. NAPA believes that EM headquarters needs an organizational focus for communicating corporately with its many stakeholders.



# 2006 Intergovernmental Meeting (Nov 06)

Summary:

**There is a foundation to build upon  
but there is a lot to work on.**



# Environmental Management Advisory Board

## 9/06 Report: Communications/Outreach Recommendations

- Establish a permanent position to provide the needed communications role in EM.
- Incorporate communications into all aspects of decision making.
- Incorporate a communications element to performance appraisal plans for key managers.
- Measure the effectiveness of current communications tools.
- Ensure that timely, adequate information and responses are provided to local, state, and tribal governments.

